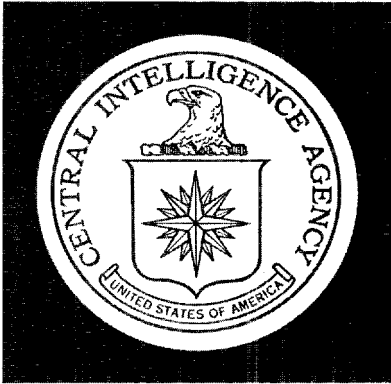


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## SPECIAL MEMORANDUM

*Turkey: Cracks in the Alliance*

MORI/CDF

**Secret**

13 August 1968  
No. 19-68

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

13 August 1968

SPECIAL MEMORANDUM NO. 19-68

SUBJECT: Turkey: Cracks in the Alliance\*

SUMMARY

A period of mounting friction in Turkish-American relations is in prospect. With the dimming of the Soviet threat and reductions in foreign aid from the West, the Turkish government is publicly asserting an independent foreign course. Inside Turkey, the opposition views the US as an obstacle to its quest for office and as a convenient whipping boy for its dislike of the ruling Justice Party (JP). In this situation, the JP has been reluctant to defend the US, and renegotiation of bilateral arrangements has been under way since 1966.

While Turkey will almost certainly not disengage from the Western alliance, the trend is toward restrictions on present US operations in Turkey. Whenever these arrangements come to parliament for ratification, they are in for rough sledding. Even the Turkish military leaders probably will not urge continuing the present degree of intimacy with the US, unless they receive a considerably higher level of military assistance than is in prospect.

Reductions in the US presence may eliminate some points of friction; though rapid and deep cuts might alarm Turkish leaders. But the more US aid decreases, the more difficult it will be to convince the Turks that the alliance does not favor the US, while slighting Turkey's own interests.

\* This memorandum was prepared by the Office of National Estimates. It was discussed with representatives of the Office of Current Intelligence, the Office of Economic Research,

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1. The climate of Turkey's foreign policy has changed significantly in recent years. Since 1960, successive Turkish governments have moved away from the former practice of automatically following the lead of NATO in general and the US in particular. While still basically committed to the Western alliance, Turkish foreign policy has assumed an increasingly individualistic cast. Even the present Justice Party (JP) government of Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel -- of all Turkish political groups perhaps the most well disposed toward the US -- is asserting publicly its independent foreign course. It has vigorously defended Turkish interests in Cyprus even though this has sometimes disrupted Greek-Turkish cooperation in NATO. Moreover, the Demirel government has since 1966 been renegotiating all of its numerous outstanding bilateral arrangements with the US; in important particulars it has already curtailed the previously very broad US freedom of operations in Turkey.

Impact of External Events

2. In part, these changes reflect basic alterations in the international situation. Although historic Turkish suspicions of Russia persist, the threat of Soviet territorial demands has

- 2 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

S-E-C-R-E-T

faded. Under Khrushchev, the USSR renounced all claims on Turkey's eastern provinces and the Straits; the Soviets have progressively muted their hostility toward the Turkish regime to the point where they no longer condition offers of friendship and assistance on Turkish withdrawal from NATO. Over the past few years, the USSR has dispatched a procession of top-level dignitaries to Ankara and has extended a long term credit of over \$200 million in economic aid, of which the Turks have thus far drawn only about \$1.5 million. Moscow is also sending a small permanent mission to advise on Turkey's economic development. The Soviets have extended useful support to the Turkish cause in the Cyprus dispute. These moves have far overshadowed the impact of establishing a Soviet naval force in the eastern Mediterranean, and most Turkish political leaders now appear persuaded that the Soviet Union does not present any immediate threat to their security.

3. At the same time, changes in NATO's strategic position generate ambivalence in Turkish attitudes. On the one hand, Turkish leaders are worried that NATO's military effectiveness is diminishing, particularly with the cut back of US forces committed to the alliance and the disengagement of France under

- 3 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

S-E-C-R-E-T

de Gaulle. Indeed, the continuing relaxation of European attitudes toward the cold war is inspiring doubt among Turks that their NATO allies would come to their assistance in the event of hostilities. On the other hand there is a growing conviction that Turkey has ceased to be a prime military target, hence it might be able to stay out of conflicts between other NATO countries and the USSR. Under these circumstances a growing number of Turks are questioning the desirability of retaining military facilities associated with the US or NATO which might invite Soviet attack in the event of a conflict.

4. The decline of military aid from the West over the past decade has contributed to these attitudes. US military assistance reached its peak level of \$249 million in 1958; in the past fiscal year it amounted to just under \$100 million and further cuts are in prospect. In view of the growing disparity between Turkish expectations and Western aid extended, the US in 1966 persuaded the Turkish military establishment to scale down its NATO force goals which had become clearly unattainable in view of any likely level of foreign assistance. In return, the US revealed plans to supply \$670 million in military aid over

- 4 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

S-E-C-R-E-T

the five year period ending in 1970. US military aid, however, has fallen far short of this target and seems unlikely to total much above \$500 million for the full five years. US inability to fulfill its plan has generated discontent among Turkish military leaders and has fostered doubts about the continuing value of the alliance.

5. Economic assistance from the West has also begun to decrease. Since 1962, the US has extended most of its economic aid in the context of an international consortium composed mainly of European donors. The level of consortium aid is now falling, principally because the US contribution has been cut from some \$140 million to about \$80 million in fiscal 1968. In fact, the proposed levels of long-term aid extended in 1968 by Western countries, while continuing to be of substantial importance, no longer meet the requirements of Turkey's development plan, forcing it to turn to the IMF and other international monetary agencies for short-term foreign currency loans. The declining level of economic assistance reinforces the widely prevalent notion that NATO, and especially the US, are placing a lower valuation on Turkey's friendship and its strategic position.

- 5 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

S-E-C-R-E-T

6. These underlying Turkish attitudes have been brought into dramatic focus and accelerated by events surrounding the Cyprus dispute with Greece. The clash between the US position and the Turks' strong desire to protect their community on the island has been the chief factor in tarnishing America's heretofore highly favorable image among the Turkish population at large. On more than one occasion in the past five years, the US has used its leverage to dissuade the Turks from landing troops on the island. The intensity of US opposition to Turkish plans to invade Cyprus in 1964 shocked Turkish politicians of all stripes; many suspected that the US in fact supported the Greek cause. Suspicion and frustration were only partly dissipated by the success of Presidential Representative Cyrus Vance in November 1967 in negotiating the withdrawal of Greek troops illegally stationed on the island. Present talks between the Greek and Turkish communities on Cyprus have eased the Cyprus dispute, but the memories of painful US pressures persist.

Internal Political Pressures

7. Domestic developments too have played an important part in influencing Turkish foreign policy. The small and

- 6 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

S-E-C-R-E-T

vocal reformist elite has never been able to win a clear victory in free elections.\* Except for three years as the dominant partner of a series of shaky coalition governments after the 1961 elections, these heirs of Ataturk have been in opposition since 1950. The Democratic Party under Prime Minister Menderes and the Justice Party under Demirel have both rejected the austere state-directed economic structure proposed by these reformists in favor of a mixed economy, in which private enterprise has a major role. The opposition is convinced that the JP's economic policies would long since have been found bankrupt without the US aid program. Noting the US desire to see private enterprise thrive, opposition elements feel emotionally impelled to question US motivations and to construe American good will toward the JP as an important obstacle in their quest for power.

8. The most extreme wing of the opposition is the far left Turkish Labor Party (TLP). This still tiny party -- which won only about 4.7 percent of the vote in the June 1968 Senatorial elections -- is spearheading demands that Turkey withdraw from

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\* The Republican Peoples Party, which has traditionally represented these elements, ruled Turkey under a one-party regime from 1920 until 1950. It won a plurality in the lower house in the 1961 elections, when its opponents were badly split.

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S-E-C-R-E-T

NATO, break all bilateral agreements with the US, and establish itself as a neutralist state having warm relations with the Soviet Union. The TLP voices these demands in a drumfire of criticism in parliament, and its allegations that NATO arrangements are infringing Turkey's sovereignty strike a responsive chord in Turkish public opinion. More recently the TLP has been able to spark serious student demonstrations against the American presence and to channel some labor disputes into action against US companies. It has imbued Turkey's growing social discontent with a vague anti-American flavor.

9. Under pressure of competition from the TLP, the Republican Peoples Party (RPP) -- the principal opposition party -- is becoming increasingly critical of both NATO and the US. After a long and evidently heated policy meeting in mid-July 1968, the RPP leadership, called for significant changes in the alliance, particularly in respect of Turkey's relations with the US.

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imposition of more stringent control over operations of foreign military personnel and installations, and the development of forces independent of NATO sufficient to protect Turkey's interests. Nevertheless, it still seems willing to allow for considerable leeway in the application of these principles and acknowledges Turkey's need to remain in NATO.

- 8 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

S-E-C-R-E-T

JP Responses

10. The JP government has already shown itself to be heavily influenced by the views of the opposition on foreign policy. Recalling the fate of Menderes, the JP leaders feel a basic insecurity because of the traditional ties between the armed forces and the RPP. Demirel has established a good working relationship with the top military leaders, who by virtue of their seniority have a vested interest in the status quo. But many senior officers are discontented with falling levels of military aid, and are influenced by the growing nationalist fervor of the reformist elite. The government is far less sure of the loyalty of the middle level officers. Hence the JP has felt impelled to react with particular sensitivity to opposition claims that the number of US-Turkish bilateral facilities and their use impinge excessively on Turkey's sovereignty.

11. Feeling itself threatened by the rising tide of criticism of its foreign policy, the JP has been reluctant to defend the US from attack. The cabinet has not intervened to end strikes of Turkish workers against US firms working on military installations -- though such strikes would clearly have been

- 9 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

S-E-C-R-E-T

stopped had the contractors been Turkish firms. Lacking a strong government lead, the security forces have sometimes seemed half-hearted in protecting US personnel in Turkey from hostile demonstrations; the indecisive handling of the widespread disturbances during the visit of the Sixth Fleet to Istanbul in July was a particularly glaring example of the government's reluctance to take unpopular action on behalf of the US.

12. To answer its domestic critics, the Turks are indicating that they will progressively take over sole operation of all existing bilateral facilities. The government is also promising to extract substantial concessions during the renegotiations of the bilateral agreements. Such tactics have for the present strengthened the government's hand in meeting opposition attacks and have permitted relations with the US to continue without much change. But in the longer run, pressures on the government to insist on recognition as the controlling partner in any formal arrangements with the US will probably increase.

#### Outlook

13. Relations between the US and Turkey are in a transitional stage. The full impact of the declining aid trend has not yet

- 10 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

S-E-C-R-E-T

been felt in Turkish ruling circles. Aid already in the pipeline will mitigate the impact of this decrease for a few more years. But eventually the full measure of the reduction will become apparent. This will provide ammunition for those elements in Turkey demanding disengagement from the Western alliance. We do not predict that these forces will prevail in the foreseeable future -- Turkey's general Western orientation is too profound to make this likely. It does seem probable, however, that Turkey's participation in NATO and especially the shape of bilateral arrangements with the US will be noticeably affected within a few years.

14. The course of the negotiations on bilateral arrangements, under way since 1966 will be one of the most instructive indicators of future Turkish policy. Thus far the Turks have pursued these negotiations without any notable urgency. The effort to reconcile the desires of the military establishment, the opposition, and the JP itself is an unappetizing task for the government. Moreover, the JP leaders probably recognize that insistence on an agreement which would fully satisfy important sectors of the Turkish power structure could substantially impair relations with the US. And with its deep emotional attachment to the West, the Justice Party seems unprepared psychologically to damage these relations at this time.

- 11 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

S-E-C-R-E-T

15. The prospect of general elections, which are due by the fall of 1969 at the latest, further sharpens the JP's dilemma. If Demirel should cut through the obstacles presently blocking agreement with the US and bring a pact to parliament even well before elections, vigorous opposition would almost certainly follow -- led by the TLP and with the RPP joining in, albeit in less extreme fashion. The opposition views the bilateral relationship with the US as a convenient pretext to vent its distaste for the JP's domestic policy. Even the extreme right, which has already shown its sympathy for efforts to tweak the nose of the US, is apt to attack the government. Not only would the parliamentary outcry embarrass the JP -- though the latter has sufficient votes to take any action it wishes -- but it would almost certainly make foreign policy a prominent issue in the election. Public ventilation of the bilateral relationship in these circumstances would tend to stiffen the JP posture toward the US, and the government might feel obliged to accept restrictive amendments during the process of ratification. In view of these possibilities, Demirel may prefer to let negotiations with the US drag on until after the elections, particularly as it seems likely that the number of TLP deputies would then decrease as a result of recent changes in the electoral law. Whenever he brings the agreement to parliament, however, it is almost certainly in for rough sledding.

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16. The Turkish military establishment probably will not press the government to continue even the present degree of intimacy with the US, at least unless the US is considerably more forthcoming with military assistance. Chief of Staff General Tural and his colleagues strongly sympathize with the tide of nationalist sentiment rising in Turkey. They will undoubtedly urge the JP government to extract as much aid as possible in any agreement.

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- 13 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

S-E-C-R-E-T

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[REDACTED] As time passes, Turkish concern for better relations with the Soviets is likely to prevail over the long-standing Turkish interest in having such a deterrent force.

18. All in all, this adds up to a period of mounting friction in Turkish-US relations. Reductions in the profile of the US presence occasioned by BALPA, the turnover of an additional facility or two to Turkish control, or even a cut back in American military personnel would reduce points of friction somewhat, though very rapid and deep cuts might alarm Turkish leaders. But the nub of the problem would not be affected. The more US aid -- military and economic -- decreases, the more difficult it will be to convince the Turks that the alliance is not a one-sided arrangement under which US defense and intelligence interests are served at little cost, while Turkey's are slighted or ignored.

FOR THE BOARD OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES:



ABBOT SMITH  
Chairman

- 14 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

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